INDNESS LURKS IN THE TEETH

. Bowers

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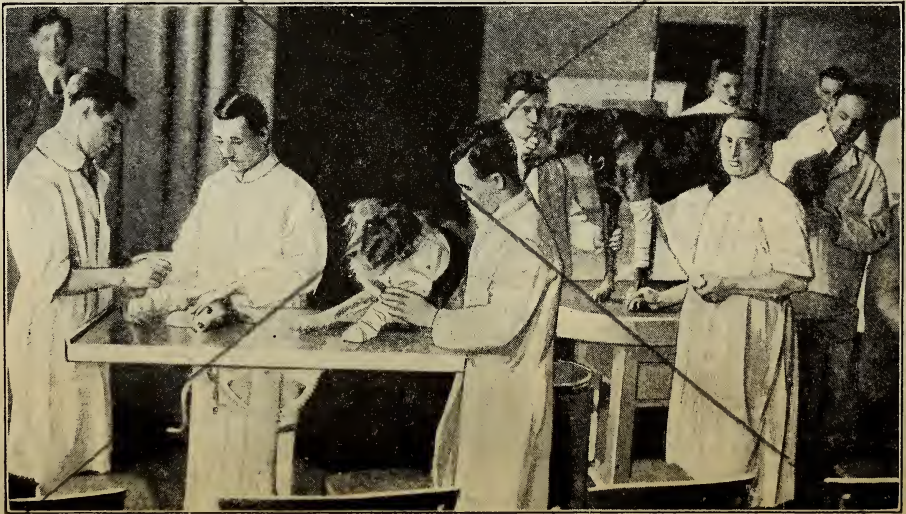

Dogs undergoing operations in the operating room of the University of Pennsylvania

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Blindness Lurks in the Teeth

How Science Has Restored Vision by Uprooting Hidden Poison Factories

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PHYSICIANS to-day agree that decayed teeth and infected gums may cause serious diseases, even blindness and death.

In the following article a national authority on the relation of teeth to health tells what science, with the aid of the X-Ray machine, has learned about the poison factories hidden in the roots of our teeth or around the margins of our gums.

He tells why scrupulous care and repair of teeth is one of the most valuable forms of life insurance.

Katherine Bryden, of Grantwood, N. J., whose abscessed teeth caused total blindness and finally nervous prostration. Extraction of teeth restored sight and health

By Edwin F. Bowers, M.D.

Noted American Authority on Teeth and Health

FOUR hundred million defective teeth exist in the United States—about four defective teeth to each person. If all these teeth were cared for properly, an average of 10 years would be added to the life of every normal man, woman and child in the land.

Among school children dental disease is so common that only about three children in a thousand have perfect teeth.

These recent estimates by the Columbia University School of Dentistry reveal a source of untold disease, misery and even death that might be prevented absolutely if we as a nation would learn how to take care of our teeth. Their importance can hardly be over-estimated. For scientists have proved positively that the health of our bodies depends largely upon the health of our teeth. In fact, so closely interrelated are teeth and health that not even the greatest expert can tell where one leaves off and the other begins.

We recognize, of course, the importance of teeth in preparing food for digestion. Without proper breaking up of the food, the digestive juices cannot attack it and complete stomach digestion.

Poor Teeth—Bad Nutrition

Poorly prepared food—poorly prepared because of bad teeth or lack of teeth—thus may be considered as a primary cause of faulty nutrition, resulting in anemia, neurasthenia, and the host of symptoms that follow chronic indigestion and auto-intoxication from intestinal absorption.

There is a very close relation, too, between decayed teeth and a large number of diseases that apparently have nothing to do with the teeth, such as ulcers and cancers of the stomach, rheumatism and diseases of the kidneys.

Pathologists tell us that, in many instances, the germ or strain of bacteria found in a diseased appendix was first developed in an infected tooth or an abscessed gum. The infected germ is carried in the blood stream, until it finally lodges in the vulnerable appendix.

The relation of decayed teeth to decayed lungs also is a most intimate one. We are spending much time, money and thought upon tuberculosis and its prevention; yet how many of us realize that many cases of tuberculosis can be traced directly to malnutrition caused by improper chewing of the food, or from the direct infection of diseased mouths. The germs of tuberculosis almost always enter the system through the mouth and the breathing passages. Therefore, bad mouth conditions are a fertile source of aid to the ravaging germs of tuberculosis.

Many cases of mouth-breathing and adenoids arise because of neglect of brush, tooth paste and elbow grease, persistently applied. Ulcerated tonsils and swelling of the glands of the neck, and those very serious diseases of the cavities of the facial bones (sinus abscesses) develop quite frequently from an infection of the teeth.

In fact, the malignant germs, breeding in infected teeth and gums, together with the poisonous products they engender, may be absorbed into the blood, or the lymph stream, and thus be carried to every cell in the body. The damage they may do can be measured only in terms of their own harmful activity, plus the lowered resistance of the tissues in which they finally lodge.

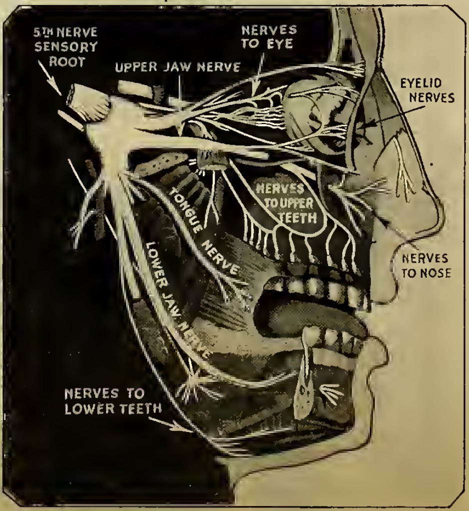
Even total blindness has been traced to poisonous conditions of the teeth and gums. In many instances, perfect vision has been restored by the correction of abnormal oral states. Among a number of such cases brought to my attention is that of Miss Katherine Bryden, of Grantwood, N. J. Miss Bryden was 23 years old last May. Until 12 years ago, she enjoyed perfect sight in both eyes. But in November, 1911, her vision gradually faded, until finally, she became totally blind in the right eye, and retained hardly more than perception of light in the left.

Three years ago, Miss Bryden's health failed utterly. She suffered from nervous prostration and was rarely free from "colds" and throat trouble. Appetite and nutrition were affected to such an extent that she lost more than 30 pounds in weight.

Sight Is Restored

Finally, Miss Bryden was examined by a New York specialist in oral surgery and an authority on X-ray diagnosis. He made a series of X-ray photographs of this patient's mouth. Numerous abscesses, as shown on page 50, were revealed. Extraction of all the upper teeth was advised.

The results of this extraction were almost miraculous. The patient's vision improved immediately. Her throat trouble vanished and she gained steadily in weight, in appetite, and in her ability to digest and assimilate food. Her bodily resistance has



How the nerves of the teeth, eyes, eyelids, nose, jaws, lips and tongue are interrelated through the trigeminal, or fifth nerve, is shown in this diagram been so enhanced that she hasn't had a "cold" for upwards of two years.

The explanation for this miracle of healing is simple enough. The germs and poisonous products that had exerted their disturbing effect on the functioning capacity of the optic nerve were removed—therefore sight came back. At the same time, every cell and tissue in the body was relieved of an overdose of poison, and began to function normally.

Poison Factories of the Teeth

In this typical X-ray photograph of the teeth, the white portions indicate decay, sources of infection. They are poison factories that undermine health

There is hardly an oral surgeon in active practice who cannot detail cases that seemingly have not the slightest connection with the teeth, yet which have made complete recovery, following the extraction of abscessed teeth, the clearing up and proper filling of infected root canals, the aseptic treatment of pus-laden pyorrhoea packets, or the removal of a molar tooth—buried crosswise in the jaw.

Neuritis of years' standing, sciatica, rheumatism, neuralgia, headaches, and many other painful conditions have been overcome almost as though by magic, when septic mouth conditions disclosed by the searching eye of the X-ray were cleared up.

I recall another case—that of a healthy, robust looking man, who suddenly began to suffer from neuritis in the shoulder. He had tried all sorts of treatment, diet, mineral water, aspirin, and rheumatism medicine, nation of 2537 teeth with non-vital pulps, 1404 showed pussy conditions in the tissues surrounding their roots.

Strange as it may seem, it is now conceded that a dead tooth requires watching more than does a living, functioning tooth. With its source of nutrition cut off by local tissue degeneration, the dead tooth is much more likely to start putrefactive changes in its surrounding tissue. Abscesses therefore are quite common in these teeth.

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Dr. Rodriguez has isolated three types of bacteria with an exceedingly high acid-producing power. They produce acid fast enough and strong enough to dissolve the hard, limey structure of the teeth, and penetrate right through the enamel into the deep tissue.

There is one phase of the subject of dental care which only within the last ten years has begun to be understood. This has to do with the relation of tooth nutrition to food intake.

Primitive man kept his teeth in very fair condition. This is proved by the condition of the teeth in the skulls in the British Museum and the Smithsonian Institute. They are wonderfully sound and free from evidence of dental decay.

In a large measure, this was due to the fact that primitive man ate his food without cooking it. He tore the flesh from the bones and gnawed these bones in quite as workmanlike a manner as any dog would. Later on—a hundred centuries later, perhaps, he became a grain eater. And on the coarsely cracked grain, baked as hard as a rock in its red bed of embers, he gave his teeth still more exercise. At the same time, he supplied his body with the tooth and

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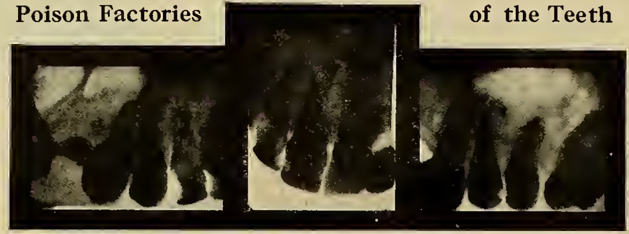

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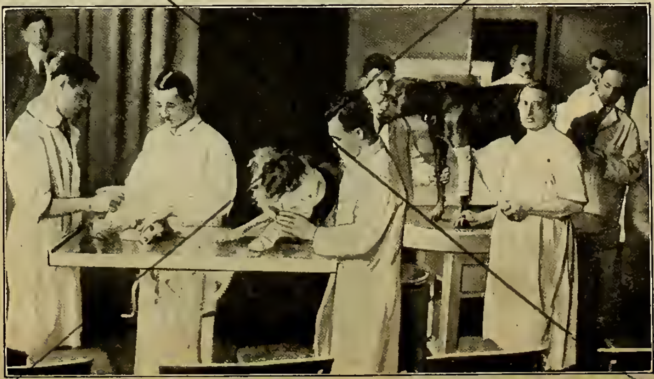

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